



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **North Dakota Department of Health Testing Williston Water System** *Water System Safe, Further Testing Planned*

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) and the city of Williston, in response to an oil spill near Glendive, Montana, has sampled and tested the city's drinking water supply.

Although low levels of hydrocarbon contaminants have been detected in Williston's water system, the water is safe for consumption. The safety standard for benzene in drinking water is 5 parts per billion (ppb). Between January 21 and 22, the level of benzene in raw water entering the plant went from 2.4 to .64 ppb; the level in treated water went from 3.29 to .80 ppb; and the level in the water distribution system went from less than .5 to .64 ppb. All of the benzene numbers, along with test results on other hydrocarbons, are well within the federal and state standards for safe drinking water. NDDoH and the city will continue to test the water system to protect public health.

It is not clear if the contaminants are from the spill in Glendive or another source, and the investigation is ongoing. The Environmental Protection Agency will be testing the river water between Sydney and the North Dakota border to try to determine whether hydrocarbons from that spill have reached the state.

NDDoH will be testing other water supplies connected to the Yellowstone and Missouri River systems. NDDoH has been working with local water system operators and public health officials to increase their awareness of the spill and potential public water issues. Along with testing by NDDoH, local operators are monitoring their systems for evidence of contamination.

For more information, contact Dave Glatt, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5152.

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